

ESTABLISHED 1877—NEW SERIES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1888.

VOL. VII—NO. 25—WHOLE NO. 337.

THE CAVALRY BUREAU.

The Methods of Its Working in the Western Armies.

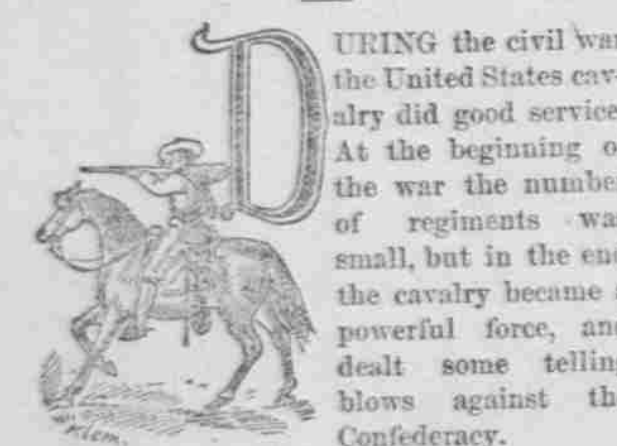
SCARCITY OF HORSES.

Recruiting Kilpatrick at Gen. Thomas's Expense.

TROOPERS AT NASHVILLE.

How Well the Dismounted Regiments Served.

BY COL. ALBERT G. BRACKETT, 3d U. S. CAV., FORT CLARK, TEX.



DURING the civil war the United States cavalry did good service. At the beginning of the war the number of regiments was small, but in the end the cavalry became a powerful force, and dealt some telling blows against the Confederacy.

The foresight of some good cavalry officers caused the formation of what was known as the Cavalry Bureau, which had for its object the organization and equipment of the cavalry forces, and the provision for their mounts and remounts. The details for this organization were embraced in a General Order issued from the War Department July 28, 1863, and Maj. Gen. George Stoneman was placed in charge of the bureau at Washington.

THE VAST SUMS EXPENDED

in the maintenance of the cavalry arm pointed to the necessity of greater care and more judicious management on the part of cavalry officers, so that the horses might be kept up to the standard necessary for the efficiency of the service. Great neglect of duty was attributed to the officers in command of cavalry, and it was the design of the War Department to correct such neglect by discharging from the service officers whose inefficiency and inattention resulted in the deterioration and loss of the public animals under their charge. There had been great carelessness, beyond a doubt, and when the supply of horses failed to meet the demand, the situation became so serious as to attract earnest attention.

On the 1st of July, 1864, I was detailed for duty as Acting Inspector-General of Cavalry for the Department of the Cumberland, by virtue of Special Orders, No. 225, from the War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, and ordered to report by letter to the Chief of the Cavalry Bureau for instructions. On the 5th of July I was detailed by the same authority as Special Inspector of Cavalry for the same Department.

Being in St. Louis at the time, I was obliged to wait until I could hear from Washington, but soon obtained my instructions, which were to proceed to the Army of the Cumberland and keep the Cavalry Bureau fully informed of the condition of the cavalry troops, without reference to the Generals under whom they were serving or the particular orders given them from time to time.

I reached the headquarters of Maj. Gen. Thomas in front of Atlanta July 21, 1864, the day before the battle of Decatur, in which the gallant

Gen. McPHERSON WAS KILLED, causing so much sorrow throughout the whole Military Division of the Mississippi, commanded by Gen. Sherman.

The firing in front of the Army of the Cumberland from the Confederate entrenchments of Atlanta was kept up all the time, causing a continual loss to our army. This firing was returned in good faith, resulting in an equal loss to the enemy. For several days I remained at the headquarters of Gen. Thomas, endeavoring to carry out the orders I had received from the War Department, but, owing to the hot work of the siege, was unable to accomplish very much.

When I visited the cavalry division commanded by Gen. Kenner Garrard, on the 14th of August, 1864, I found that for two weeks previously his men had been actively engaged against the enemy, being dismounted and serving as infantry in the trenches. The horses were left in the woods in the rear, where there was no grazing, in charge of soldiers detailed for that purpose. On the whole the animals looked hearty, though they were thin, and appeared to have been as well cared for as circumstances would admit.

In Georgia at that time it was impossible to obtain hay, and the hard marches which the horses had been obliged to make reduced them greatly. The officers did everything in their power to keep the animals in good condition, and the commanders were zealous in the performance of their duties. The railroad between Atlanta and Chattanooga was frequently cut by the rebels, and no forage at times was received, which caused considerable suffering to the horses, as they were required to work a great part of the time.

On the 25th of August I inspected one of the brigades of Gen. Edward M. McCook's Division of Cavalry at Cartersville, Ga., after having inspected Gen. Kilpatrick's

Division at Sandtown, and found that the cavalry had suffered very much in the late raids near Atlanta, and had been worked hard. Still the men and many of the horses were in excellent condition, and only needed more animals to render them highly efficient.

In general terms, on the 1st of September I found that McCook's Division had 417 serviceable horses and 4,000 men; requiring 3,500 horses. Garrard's Division had 7,142 men and 3,722 horses; requiring 3,000 remounts to make them happy. Kilpatrick's Division had 6,203 troopers and only 2,328 animals; needing 3,000 chargers to put them in good condition to follow that successful cavalry leader.

Soon afterward I went to Huntsville, Ala., where I tried to inspect some Tennessee Union cavalry regiments, and while at work at the Third Regiment it was ordered off against the rebel cavalry before the inspection was completed. The other regiments were

KEPT CONTINUALLY MARCHING after the Confederates, and moved off where I could not well reach them.

Soon after our forces obtained possession of Atlanta I went to Gen. Thomas to ascertain how much cavalry he would need in and about Atlanta, as it was then supposed we would be there some time. He thought that one brigade ought to be stationed on the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad; another along the North Alabama Railroad between Nashville and Decatur; another at Chattanooga, to patrol the country south of the Tennessee River between Bridgeport and Rome, and between Resaca and Charleston, on the Hiwassee River, and another still between Resaca and Atlanta, for patrolling the country.

He thought if the Secretary of War had only given him authority to organize home-guards, the last designated brigade could be dispensed with. This amount of cavalry he thought ought to be supplied chiefly with forage by the railroad, but getting a portion of their supplies from the surrounding country.

Gen. Thomas at that time was strongly in favor of Mann's cavalry equipments, which he considered superior to any other, and was gratified to learn that the Government was receiving none other, and Spencer carbines. He believed if he could get Gen. Gillen's Cavalry Division, in Tennessee, equipped with that arm, that officer would be able to protect the railroads in that State. He said if he could get

ALL THE CAVALRY IN THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND MOUNTED, properly equipped and kept up to the strength it then had, it would be all that he would need.

As has been shown, many regiments were greatly in need of horses, and Gen. Thomas at that time thought it best to send the dismounted regiments back to Nashville to be remounted, the horses and men to return to the front afterward, as transportation could not be furnished by rail. At that time I urged the Cavalry Bureau to send 9,000 horses to the Department of the Cumberland, in addition to the 3,000 already sent.

On the 10th of October all communication between Atlanta and Nashville was cut off, the enemy having done a great deal of damage to the railroad, and Gen. Thomas was away with all the cavalry, following the Confederate forces between Atlanta and Chattanooga. There were many horses in Atlanta which had been used by the cavalry, starving for want of food that could not be procured in any way in sufficient quantity to supply the demand. This was a sad state of affairs, which had to be borne as patiently as possible.

In the meantime I received a dispatch from Washington saying that the number of horses at Louisville for the Department of the Cumberland had been additionally in-

creased by three to four hundred a week ever since the last dispatch. Plenty of horses were soon after this in Louisville for the Department of the Cumberland, and it only remained to see how they could be sent to the front and placed in the hands of the soldiers.

Soon afterward Gen. Thomas himself returned to Nashville, where

THE TROOPERS WERE MOUNTED AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

Gen. Sherman was most anxious to get the cavalrymen mounted, as by this time he had determined upon his great march to the sea.

Col. Amos Beckwith, Acting Chief Quartermaster of the Military Division of the Mississippi, asked me about the prospect of getting horses to Atlanta for the horsemen of Sherman's army. There was supposed to be plenty of animals in Louisville for that purpose, and by changing about in one way and another, Sherman's troopers were all mounted. But even then the supply for the troopers which remained after his dash for the sea was wholly inadequate, and gave Gen. Thomas great uneasiness.

Gen. Hood, with his army, had now got

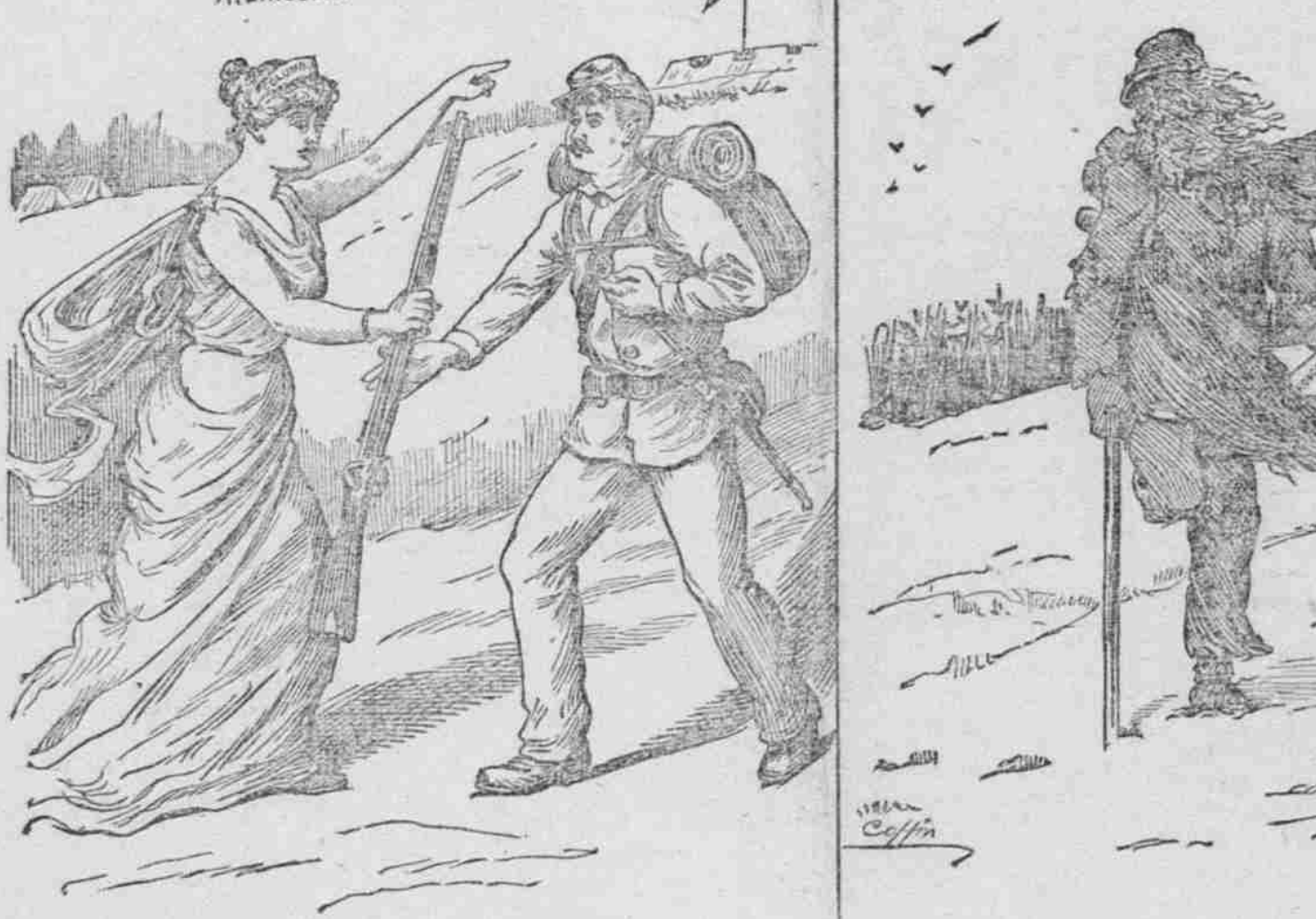
out of Gen. Sherman's clutches and was moving westward, when Sherman determined to drop everything and push eastward through the heart of the Confederacy. He returned to Atlanta, and on the morning of the 15th of November started on his great march to the sea, taking with him Gen. Kilpatrick's Cavalry Division, composed of two brigades, commanded by Col. Eli H. Murray, of Kentucky, and Smith D. Atkins, of Illinois, numbering 5,635 men.

On the 28th of October, 1864, I was ordered to report to Gen. Wilson, commanding the cavalry of the Military Division of the Mississippi, and found him at Rome, Ga.; when I was directed by him to go to Vicksburg and Memphis to look after the mounted men in those places.

I went to St. Louis to see what could be done toward getting horses and arms for Gen. Thomas's cavalrymen, and while there GEN. HALLECK COUNTERMANDED THE ORDER

THEN AND NOW.

1861. 1888.



COLUMBIA: "Unless you, my son, save me, I will be ruined. Go, and do your duty, and if you save me I will be your generous friend and protector as long as you live."

Over the Hills to the Poorhouse."

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for me to go to Vicksburg, and I was directed to await orders in St. Louis. I found no cavalry arms in St. Louis. Fifteen hundred horses had been sent from that place to Louisville, and 1,500 more were available for the same purpose. Gen. Rosecrans, then in command in Missouri, informed me that Gen. Winslow's dismounted men were on their way to St. Louis, the remainder being with Maj. Gen. Curtis below Prairie Grove, Ark. Gen. Rosecrans had sent orders for their return as soon as the pursuit of the Confederate forces under Gen. Price was ended. It would take 10 days to bring them back from the place they were last heard from.

On the 25th of November Gen. Thomas telegraphed to Gen. Grant at City Point, Va., as follows: "Your dispatch of 4 p. m. yesterday just received. Hood's entire army is in front of Columbia, and so greatly outnumbering mine that I am compelled to act on the defensive. None of Gen. A. J. Smith's troops have arrived yet, although they embarked at St. Louis on Tuesday last. The transportation of Gen. Hatch's and Grierson's cavalry was ordered by Gen. Washburne, I am told, to be turned in at Memphis, which has crippled the only cavalry I have at this time. All my cavalry was dismounted to furnish horses for Gen. Kilpatrick's Division, which went with Gen. Sherman. My dismounted cavalry is now detained at Louisville awaiting arms and horses."

"HORSES ARE ARRIVING SLOWLY, and arms have been detained somewhere en route, for more than a month. Gen. Grierson has been detained by conflicting orders in Kansas and from Memphis, and it is impossible to say when he will reach here. Since being in charge of affairs in Tennessee I have lost nearly 15,000 men, discharged by expiration of service and permitted to go home to vote. My gain is probably 12,000 of perfectly raw troops; therefore, as the enemy so greatly outnumber me, both in infantry and cavalry, I am compelled, for the present, to act on the defensive. The moment I can get my cavalry I will march against Hood, and if Forrest can be reached he will be punished."

In the meantime I returned to Nashville. Horses were not easily procured from any direction. The east, west and north was scoured for them, and wherever they were found were seized and Quartermaster's vouchers given in payment. Things had reached a serious pass, and no excuse was received. Horseflesh was wanted on which to mount our Union troopers, and minor obstacles were brushed out of the way. Gen. Thomas wanted to have mounted men enough ready, so that when he got Hood started he could push him until he was driven out of the Confederacy.

THE BATTLE OF FRANKLIN occurred on the 30th of November. During that day Gen. Wilson's troopers on the left were brilliantly engaged; first, in driving back the enemy's cavalry across Harpeth River, and subsequently in successfully resisting Forrest's attempts to gain the north bank of the river, and fall upon the flank of the Union army.

Every exertion was put forth by all who were attached to the cavalry service to obtain the necessary remounts, and squads of soldiers were sent out to seize such animals as could be found on the roads or farms. A cavalry soldier dismounted is not the most spirited creature in the world, and new life seems to be instilled into him the moment

he gets astride of a mettlesome steed. This delay was exceedingly vexatious, but there was no help for it, and so had to be submitted to with the best grace possible.

At the battles of Nashville, the Union cavalry consisted of the 19th Pa., 7th Ohio, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 6th, 10th and 12th Tenn.; 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Ind.; 12th Mo.; 3d, 6th, 7th, 9th, 14th and 16th Ill.; 2d, 5th and 8th Iowa; 2d and 8th Mich.; and 11th Ky. M'd Inf.; but they were not full regiments by any means; had they been, they would have been a very strong force. Many of these men, organizations were lamentably deficient in men, arms and horses.

During the battles about Nashville, a

RECOVERING A BLOODED HORSE.

great deal of the cavalry was dismounted and fought on foot, rendering good service, and doing more, probably, than any other cavalry did toward defeating the enemy and causing the Confederacy to crumble to pieces. The weather was extremely cold, and our soldiers and horses suffered very much from exposure.

After the battles I was sent to Lexington to look after the cavalry in the Department of Kentucky, and, upon reaching Louisville,

MET GEN. JOHN A. LOGAN, who was on his way to Nashville to supersede Gen. Thomas in command; but the battles had been fought, and Gen. Thomas retained his place.

In December, 1864, I reached Lexington, Ky., and immediately commenced looking after the interests of our cavalry regiments in the Department of Kentucky. I visited the 12th Ohio and 11th Mich. Cav. on the 5th of January, for the purpose of making an inspection, but found I could not do so satisfactorily, as the command of Gen. Burbridge, which had been on an expedition to Saltville, Va., where there had been a good deal of fighting, had but partly arrived, and stragglers were coming in daily. The other regiments were at Camp Nelson, 18 miles from Lexington, which place I intended to visit soon. All of the regiments needed horses; somewhere in the neighborhood of 4,000 being required, together with horse equipments. Many of the soldiers had had their feet frostbitten, and were unable to do much more than wait.

Upon going to Camp Nelson, on the 16th and 17th of January, 1865, I found the remnant of the 1st Ky. (Union) Cav., which I inspected, together with the 12th Ky. Cav. and 30th Ky. M'd Inf. and as well as the last battalions of the 5th and 6th U. S. Colored Cav. The regiments in the district were being sent out in detachments to different portions of the State for the purpose of driving out the guerrillas, that had become exceedingly troublesome.

The 1st Ky. Cav. had no horses, and it was thought that the remnant would be consolidated with some other regiment, the greater portion having already been mustered out of service. The 12th Ky. Cav. and 30th Ky. M'd Inf. I found were being remounted and equipped, they having

LOST NEARLY ALL OF THEIR HORSES on the last Saltville expedition. I found these to be good regiments, that presented a creditable appearance, considering their late arduous service. Their commanding officers (Maj. Harrison and Col. Alexander) were zealous and efficient, and were trying to place their commands in good trim for the service.

The 1st battalions of the 5th and 6th U. S. Colored Cav. had no horses left, and on the Saltville expedition had lost nearly all of their arms and accoutrements. A number of the men had been so severely frostbitten that their feet had to be amputated.

The guerrillas were very persistent in many portions of Kentucky, taking things right and left with free hands. I recollect that a party went to Mr. Alexander's celebrated stock-farm, near Lexington, where one of them took a very valuable horse and without more ado rode him away. The owner was almost inconsolable, when a friend came forward and said to him: "Mr. Alexander, give me a good horse, and I will overtake the guerrillas and recover your favorite for you."

This Mr. Alexander was only too glad to do, and saluting forth, before a great while this friend overtook the guerrillas.

Riding up to the one who was on the race-horse, he said to him: "Hello, my friend! I want to trade horses with you. You are riding a pet horse of mine, and I do not wish to part with him."

"Is that a fact?" queried the guerrilla.

"Yes, it is," said the man; "and if you will give him to me I will cheerfully give you the horse I am riding, which you see is a good one."

"All right," replied the guerrilla; "one horse is as good as another for me;" and, dismounting, he turned over to Mr. Alexander's friend

THE CELEBRATED RACER, ASTEROID, or Norfolk, worth many thousands of dollars.

Many of the guerrillas belonged to the rebel Gen. Lyon's command, who were left behind when he escaped from the State. Others were there before, and together, they did a great deal of mischief and destroyed many lives. About 400 recruits belonging to the 5th U. S. Colored Cav. were murdered in cold blood by a small band of guerrillas in the latter part of January. These miscreants were led by a notorious character known as "Sue" Monday, who was afterward hanged in Louisville. He was an unfeeling man, whose name was a terror throughout the whole country.

At that time—March 2, 1865—I endeavored to influence the Cavalry Bureau to send 1,500 horses and sets of horse equipments, to mount the 53d, 54th and 55th Ky. Inf. Brig.-Gen. Hobson, who commanded at Lexington then, anticipated trouble as Gen. Bull Duke of the Confederate army was concentrating his command at Wytheville and Abingdon, Va., and the guerrilla parties had become very annoying since Hobson's force had been diminished by sending away four cavalry regiments. But the authorities in Washington could not see the necessity of mounting one-year infantry regiments when so much cavalry was dismounted.

On the 1st of May, 1865, Gen. John H. Morgan's old command, then under Gen. Duke, surrendered to Gen. Hobson at Mount Sterling, near Lexington, Ky. Morgan's command was well-known during the war, and gave us infinite trouble.

By this time the war was over, and the great armies of the Union began melting away. The cavalry had done its duty, and made a reputation of which our countrymen may well be proud. It had taken a long time to build up, but, when completed, it was a masterpiece of piece of work, and capable of great things. Good judges believe our cavalry was the finest body of horsemen ever assembled together in any country or under any form of government.

A goodly number of first-class cavalry leaders had been found, who were capable of handling large bodies of horsemen in such a way as to elicit the admiration of friends and send a thrill of terror through the hearts of foes. The Cavalry Bureau had been the means of saving a vast amount of money to the Government, and, at the same time, had established so complete a system of inspections that those in authority knew at once the exact state of every cavalry command in the army, and was well informed as to the ability and skill of all the officers, whether of low or high degree of rank.

Glitch Arithmetic.

Laura—So you are really engaged to him, dear? He is forty, you say; and you are twenty—just twice as old as you, love. Dear me, when you are forty he will be eighty!

Clara—Good gracious! I hadn't thought of that.

A Boy Spy in Dixie.

Service Under the Shadow of the Hangman's Noose.

"SHUT THE DOOR."

An Afternoon Listening to Parson Brownlow.

TENNESSEE UNIONISTS.

Rebel Atrocities Toward Union Suspects.

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AS I have explained, the Brownlow residence was just around the corner a little way from that of Mr. Craig, so that it was just like a neighborly "run in for a little while" for the Misses Craig to escort me, their guest, around that afternoon.

The "Parson" was a prisoner in his own house, his guard being under strict orders not to permit any communication between the imprisoned preacher and his Union friends who were at liberty outside. To make this order thoroughly effective, the officer in command of the guard found it necessary to make it general, so as to exclude everybody, as it was well seen that the people were almost unanimously loyal, and the visitors to the Brownlow family were most likely to be enemies to the rebel Government.

When we reached the door, where we encountered the guard, Miss Craig left to me the task of overcoming the obstruction. I am not sure whether it was the shameful lies that I told the guard, the gray uniform I was wearing, or the smiling face of my companion, that had the effect of inducing the man in charge to yield and admit us into the house without question; but I have always inclined to believe that the main influence was the large, imploring brown eyes of my companion, which were brought to bear on the guard.

It was Winter time, and our first greeting from the famous Unionist was to "SHUT THE DOOR."

and then at once apologizing, he complained of the rough usage he had been obliged to submit to in his own house by the guards insisting upon opening doors whenever they saw fit. Mrs. Brownlow insisted that the purpose of the soldiers was to kill her husband by exposing him to these drafts during his illness.

The Parson had been quite ill for some time, and the sickness was caused by his ex-



VISIT TO PARSON BROWNLOW.

posure while exiled in the mountains, and subsequently by his treatment while confined in the Knoxville slave-pen cage with other Unionists.

The complete story of the imprisonment, sufferings and brutal treatment of the hundreds of Unionists of East Tennessee, among whom were some old men who were preachers, lawyers and judges, as well as others of the most prominent people of that section, simply because they had dared to be loyal to the Government, would require a volume of itself; but I want here to interrupt my story of my visit to Parson Brownlow long enough to tell of an incident I witnessed there. While I was there as a rebel soldier I witnessed one horrible thing, which I do not think has ever been made generally public. It was the double execution of an old man of 70—a respected class-leader in the Methodist Church—and his son. The old man was obliged first to hear the dreadful shrieks of protesting innocence from his son's lips; and though the boy's cries pierced even the hearts of the New Orleans wharf-rats who had the execution in charge, the old man was brutally compelled by Col. Ledbetter to witness the agony of his son on the scaffold where he himself was to be hung in a few minutes.

THIS COL. LEDBETTER WAS A NATIVE OF MAINE,

who had been an officer in the Regular Army for some time before the war.

Let me return again to my story. At the time of our visit Brother Brownlow was snugly wrapped up in an old-fashioned striped shawl, and sat in a great hickory rocking-chair, with his stocking feet perched upon another, looking to me more like a sick

old woman than such a dangerous character as to require the constant attendance of an armed guard before his door. His face was thin, and his emaciation showed his recent sickness and sufferings. I can well recall the queer expression of wondering scrutiny in the big eyes of the old Parson as he slowly turned to me when I was introduced by his neighbor's daughter as a "refugee" soldier from Maryland. That he was a little bit suspicious as to the object of this visit under such circumstances is not to be wondered at when his surroundings at the time are remembered.

As a consequence, Mr. Brownlow was not inclined to talk to me more than the ordinary politeness to a stranger in his own house demanded, but Mrs. Brownlow and her daughter, who were present, did not seem to entertain any doubts or fears, for they kept up a constant chat with Miss Maggie about the "outrageous treatment" they were being subjected to.

To my own surprise (afterward, as well as theirs at the time) I mustered out some genuine expressions of sympathy for them when Mrs. Brownlow detailed how the brute, Col.

WHAT MADE THEM HOT.

Ledbetter, had, without the ceremony of a request, rudely entered the sick man's chamber, demanding that "This 'assumed' sick man must set an hour when he will be ready to leave town."

This was at a time when Mr. Brownlow was not able to lift his head from his pillow. On this outbreak Miss Maggie took occasion to say to the family:

"I'm sure

OUR FRIEND IS NOT A VERY BAD REBEL; he is pretty homesick already."

This seemed to arouse the Parson's interest, and turning to me, in a voice almost inaudible from weakness, he said:

"I should be glad to know what induced a Maryland boy to leave his home for this Speculation case."

Just what I replied I don't remember myself, only that I went as far as I dared, and said in manner, if not in words, that I was going back home. Something was said, either by Miss Maggie or myself, as to the opinions we both quietly entertained, that slavery was wrong and was at the bottom of it all, which seemed to stir the old man up in a way that astonished me.

I don't remember his exact words, but if there is any one thing that Parson Brownlow could do better than another, it was to pile up epithets.

"No," he said, raising his voice to a half-shriek; "it is not slavery. I'm a slave owner myself, and I am a Union man." And then, continued in a strain of abusive words directed to the leaders, which would read something like this:

"Any man who says I am a Black Republican, or an Abolitionist, is a liar and a scoundrel;" getting more excited as he continued, "IT'S THESE GOD-FORSAKEN, WHITE-LIVERED DEMOCRATIC LEADERS who are hell-deserving assassins."

The family seemed to be so accustomed to this sort of talk that they took such little note of the outbreak that it scarcely had the effect of stopping their own flow of complaint about the guards.

Mrs. Brownlow said to her husband in a quiet way not to allow himself to become excited, on account of his weakness, with a mild hint too that he might be overheard.

"I take back nothing I have ever said; they are corrupt, unprincipled villains. If they want satisfaction out of me for what I have said, they can find me here any day of my life—right where I have lived and preached for 30 years."

There was one remark the old man made that afternoon that I have never forgotten. Mrs. Brownlow had been telling about the dirt the rebel guards made in her hall with their tobacco, as well as the noise incident to the changing of the guard every two hours, and their rude intrusion into the bed-room at all hours—to get warm they said. The Parson, in an undertone, as if exhausted by his previous outburst, said:

"They are worse than weeds in the garden, and exactly like fleas out in my hog pen there."

Stopping a moment for breath, he kept on:

"Why, they play cards on my front porch on Sunday; and I, a preacher, have to hear their caths in my house, that would blister the lips of a saint."

When I laughed at this a little, he growled out:

"Oh, those cowardly assassins who disarm women and children and

SEEK BLOODSHED AFTER THEIR FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS

who are hiding from their persecution in the Smokey Mountains in this winter weather, have the meanness, without the courage, to do anything."

I was entertained that afternoon in a way that made such an impression on my mind that I shall never forget even a single striking point that occurred. Once the Parson had got fairly started, the rest of the party became interested listeners. When he would run down a little something would be said that would seem to wind him up again, and he would go off like a clock without a pendulum or balance-wheel. Something was said about the geographical or commercial effect of the proposed separation of the South from the North. I think I must have said something to lead up to this, as the Parson, turning to me, said, pointing his long, bony finger at me:

"Young man, it can never be done!" and by